

IN THE WILDERNESS.

Prior to the finding of coal, Carbondale was almost an impenetrable wilderness. There were forest trees, masses of laurel bushes and swamps on all sides. Some reminiscences given personally to the writer on the appearance of the town to those who came here soon after its founding may be interesting.

P. S. Joslin came here in 1832 and he says that two years later the population was not quite 1,000. At the election that year the vote did not exceed thirty. Yet with this small population and so few business men he thinks business appeared to be as active on the streets then as in the Carbondale of today. Such however is the history of many new places.

The late J. G. Thompson retained until his death vivid recollections of the appearance of primitive Carbondale. He came here in 1832. There were no streets then. Over a small section of the present cen-

George R. Love, of Brooklyn, N. Y., in describing Carbondale as he saw it in 1830, says:

"There were no fields around Carbondale at that time, and as for forests, they were of the evergreen variety, made up of hemlock, pine and laurel, and were never bare. The only bridge was the one leading to the Log Tavern. It was made of a hemlock log, about four feet in diameter, hewn and scored to the centre and placed diagonally over the Lackawanna, nearly opposite the new Trinity church edifice."

Dr. Caleb S. Weeks, of Bayside, Long Island, who came to Carbondale in 1842, says that building lots 60x150, were sold by the Company at that time for \$50, and on as long time as the buyers desired. The Company was then taking away what was considered the enormous quantity of 500 tons of coal daily.

From a copy of *The Northern Pennsylvanian* of March 11th, 1837, published by Amzi Wilson, we find



THE OLD LOG TAVERN—FIRST HOUSE BUILT IN CARBONDALE.

tre of town logs were strewn plentifully. Beyond this there was a dense virgin forest. The woods were full of big game. Bears, wolves, panthers and deer were plentiful. The boarders in the Old Log Tavern could hear wolves howling every night in the swamp. Foxes were as thick as grasshoppers, he once declared; yet little attention was paid to them.

Mr. Thompson says that it was a queer place to locate a town—just a lot of gravel hills and swamp-holes. "I can remember," he said a few years ago, "when a well near my property on Sixth avenue was a little bubbling surface spring. Now it is fourteen feet from the top of the well to the water line. That shows what filling has done."

that Carbondale had 350 scholars in its public schools and received from the State an appropriation of \$226.59 that year.

THE GRAVITY ROAD.

When the employees of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company began settling in Carbondale, the only road was a bridle path running along the Lackawanna river. The first road was one leading to the Milford and Owego turnpike. This was laid out December 21, 1828. The completion of the Gravity road, in the year 1829, first established communication with the outside world. The operation of the road was attended with great difficulty, arising from the breaking of the